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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 004574

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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR DISCUSSES MODERATE FRONT, SYRIA, VISIT
TO US WITH AYAD JAMAL AL-DIN

REF: BAGHDAD 4527

Classified By: Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary. The Ambassador met with Council of Representative (CoR) member Sayyed Ayad Jamal al-Din (Iraqiyya) December 15 to discuss Iraqiyya's involvement in the new Moderate Front (reftel). Jamal al-Din requested the Ambassador's support to facilitate a trip to the US for a three-person Iraqiyya delegation. He commented that in addition to Shi'a, Sunni, and Kurdish opinions, it is critical that President Bush hears from secular Iraqis as he develops new policies and strategies. Commenting on Iraq's neighbors Jamal al-Din noted that Syria is ready to begin discussions with Israel and he sees a USG role in facilitating that dialogue. Against Iran, however, the USG must take strong action. End Summary.

IRAQIYYA PARTICIPATION WITHIN THE MODERATE FRONT

¶2. (C) The Ambassador discussed Iraqiyya's participation in a moderate political alliance which will support the Prime Minister and include representatives from SCIRI, the Iraqi Islamic Party (IIP - Sunni), and the Kurdish Alliance. This small group, the Ambassador said, would work together to move key ideas, policies and legislation. The group has begun meeting but would be expanded to include Iraqiyya, the Ambassador said. Jamal al-Din responded that if Iraqiyya joined it would require a guarantee that the group would make decisions by consensus. He further stated the group would need to make a commitment not to "betray each other," stating that is difficult to trust "friends of Iran." Guarantees and monitoring are needed in order for this to be effective, Jamal al-Din concluded. He agreed this type of alliance could move the political process forward and said he would discuss the issue with Iraqiyya leader Ayad Allawi.

IRAQIYYA DELEGATION WANTS TO VISIT THE US

¶3. (C) Jamal al-Din told the Ambassador that in light of recent trips to the US by SCIRI leader Abdulaziz al-Hakim and IIP leader Tariq al-Hashimi, Iraqiyya wants to send a three person delegation to meet with President Bush and other senior USG officials. According to Jamal al-Din, Allawi supports this idea and has named Jamal al-Din and Adnan Pachachi as delegates. The final delegate will be one of Iraqiyya's female members, either Minister of Human Rights Wijdan Salim or CoR member Maisoon al-Damluji, Jamal al-Din said.

¶4. (C) The Ambassador supported a visit by Iraqiyya, but

suggested that Allawi should lead the group. Iraqiyya would benefit, the Ambassador said if Allawi returned to Iraq and took a more active role in the political process. Furthermore, Allawi needs to formally appoint a deputy to represent him when he is out of the country. Jamal al-Din replied that there are groups who represent Allawi, especially within the CoR, but agreed that Iraqiyya needs better organization if it is to impact the political process.

IRAQ'S NEIGHBORS - SYRIA AND IRAN

15. (C) Discussing Syria, Jamal al-Din commented that Syrian officials deny high-ranking Baath officials within Syria are supporting terrorism in Iraq. In order to appear non-sectarian, Jamal al-Din said, the Syrian government needs the Iraqi Baathists who live there because they are Sunni Arab. Jamal al-Din agreed with the aspect of the Iraq Study group report advocating dialogue with Syria. He commented that the Syrians are ready to begin talking to Israel and believes the USG could facilitate this dialogue. This type of dialogue will help in Iraq as well Jamal al-Din said, citing better border security as one benefit of dialogue with Syria. The Ambassador asked about Syria's involvement with Lebanon and whether that could be stopped. Jamal al-Din responded that Syria wants "complete control" of Lebanon and will not stop its interference.

16. (C) Jamal al-Din stated that the USG should take strong action against Iran and noted that Iran currently feels "strong and proud." Iran feels it has won, Jamal al-Din continued, because the old regime has been replaced with Iran loyalists and because the US is looking to withdrawal.

BAGHDAD 00004574 002 OF 002

According to Jamal al-Din, the US should not threaten Iran, but instead should act decisively by "striking nuclear power plants" and other key installations.
KHALILZAD